

Sentinel

COQUILLE, OREGON.

DECEMBER 29, 1949.

Pioneer Trails of Coos and Curry

BY EMIL R. PETERSON

Men have always been known to go far and undergo extreme hardships and hazards to reach gold and women. For some twenty or thirty years, beginning in the early fifties, gold mining was in its heyday up and down the Rogue river. Game was plentiful in the forests and the streams were alive with fish. Wild berries also could be obtained in season. But men must have flour, salt, sugar, bacon, plenty of plug tobacco, clothing, bedding, tools to work with.

As men went farther inland from the seaports, or from the old established routes of travel, the supplies had to be packed in over many miles of mountain trails, from distributing centers.

Roseburg was one such place from which trails radiated out in different directions. Before the coming of the railroad in the early eighties, the supplies reached Roseburg by trail and later by road from Scottsburg, coming here by ship from San Francisco.

From Roseburg, one of the trails led southwesterly through Looking Glass, Camas valley, then into the forests, over ridges and across creeks, by way of Cold Springs camp, Big Meadows and on down to the place where Mule creek flows into the Rogue river, the present site of Marial, some 55 or 60 miles upstream from Gold Beach.

John Billings was one of the early pack-team operators. His son Tom, when old enough, sometimes went with his father. Later he took an active part in the packing. Now, in 1949, Tom is past 80 years of age still resides at Marial, where he was instrumental in getting a post office established 46 years ago. It was named for his little daughter Marial Billings Paddock now has her residence at the place where she spent her childhood days. Susan Billings Dilleys, now in her 86th year, told me that her father, John Billings, had as many as 35 horses and mules in his string of pack animals.

After the S. P. railroad came up from Portland, headed south through Douglas county, Roseburg ceased to be the distributing point for the Mule creek portion of the Rogue river miners. A station was established at West Fork in Cow creek canyon, between Riddle and Glendale. The distance from West Fork to Mule creek was only about a third as far as it was to Roseburg. Naturally, West Fork became the shipping point, both in and out, for the Mule creek territory, and the pack teams were transferred to the new route.

If you are interested in getting a better picture of this old pack trail, I suggest that you pick up a map (free) recently published by the Oregon Coast Association. (It bears no date) This is one of the best road maps of Western Oregon that has come to my attention. You should be able to find one at any service station, auto court, hotel or chamber of commerce. If you don't find one otherwise, write to me and I'll see that you get one.

Lay the map down before you. Run your finger down the coast to Gold Beach; then up Rogue river about an inch on the map, to a point showing the end of the road that comes in from Coquille by way of Powers. This point, not named on the map, is where Agness is located. Now take a straight edge and run a line east from Agness, about three quarters of an inch on the map. This will bring you to the river, upstream, in the vicinity of Marial. From this point, turn your straight-edge in a northeasterly direction to Roseburg; draw a line, and you will have, roughly, the route of the old Roseburg-Mule creek trail.

Now, returning to Marial on the map, extend your first line from Agness, through Marial and on east to its intersection with the road between Roseburg and Grants Pass. This will bring you somewhere in the vicinity of West Fork. You will see that West Fork is only about a third as far from Marial as the distance to Roseburg. (I'll be glad to hear from anyone who can give more detailed and accurate information of these old pioneer trails.

Romans Began Custom Of Gifts at New Year

Some authorities claim that the invading Roman legions introduced the custom of gift-giving at New Year's time into England by 'commandeering' a la Caesar, gifts and sums of money from the populace.

Medieval royalty, who were not as wealthy as they were reported to be, revived the custom as a means of replenishing the royal wardrobes, treasuries and even larders. Queen Elizabeth relied on the custom for new petticoats, mantles, silk stockings, bracelets, necklaces, precious jewels, etc. Peers, bishops, clerics, ladies-in-waiting, physicians, cooks, everybody contributed.

Oliver Cromwell's Puritan government outlawed the custom, but it was re-revived when the Stuarts were restored to the throne. Individual circumstances governed the gift-giving among ordinary citizens and, since common pins were expensive in those days, middle class gentlemen usually gave their wives and daughters pins or 'pin money.'

Idiomatically, 'pin money' has survived the days of the expensive pin, while the custom of gift-giving at New Year's time has deteriorated into obscurity in England and the United States.

VISITORS TOUR PRODUCTION PLANTS

Tacoma, Wash.—Six branch plant operations of Weyerhaeuser Timber Company in Oregon and Washington attracted 8,331 visitors during the months of June, July, August and September, '49. This period is the height of the tourist season, when organized plant tours are conducted twice daily. Trips are arranged through-

out the year, however, for any interested groups or schools.

Bluebirds for Happiness

Baldwin, Ga.—Connie Watts, organizer of the Bluebird-Martin club here, says his proposal to turn U. S. route 23 into "the bluebird trail" is gaining support rapidly. Martin wants authorities to help him put 30,000 bird boxes on the route from Canada to Florida.

See "Spike" Leslie for insurance of all kinds, phone 5 or 95-L. tfe

Has Interesting Hobby Collecting Data

Victor West of North Bend was a visitor to Coquille this week in pursuit of his fascinating hobby of collecting information and old pictures of old sailing ships, and steamers too, that were built and sailed from Pacific coast ports.

He now has over 6,000 prints of famous ships of all kinds that were "native" to the Oregon coastal area, he says.

West says there is a regular group of such hobbyists who collect pictures, and marine facts and that they enjoy helping each other. One of them at Eureka makes him copies of rare pictures he can find to borrow for the work.

The funds given to the American Cancer society in 1947 represent an average of less than \$65 per cancer death in the U. S.

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The time is come again when we take stock of the opportunities which lie before us, and it is our hope that will mean the most successful of all New Years for you.

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Happiness ceases to be merely a word and again becomes a sincere wish.

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At a time when conviviality reigns among all men, we join in the annual mood to proffer to all the people of our town a wish for a mighty Happy New Year.

May you prosper according to your desires in 1950.

Roxy and Liberty Theatres

Coquille